

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11
AF-10 AID-05 OMB-01 TRSE-00 ACDA-12 /094 W
-----060337 181247Z /53
R 171815Z JUL 78
FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4432
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 16717

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: PEPR, GW, UR
SUBJECT: BAHR VISIT TO MOSCOW

1. SPD SECRETARY EGON BAHR VISITED MOSCOW JULY 9-16 FOR FURTHER DISCUSSIONS WITH SOVIET OFFICIALS ON ROJECTS BEING PURSUED WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF BRANDT'S GENEVA-BASED NORTH-SOUTH COMMISSION. BAHR WAS HERE IN TIDDLE APRIL ON THE SAME BUSINESS. THE LATEST VISIT CAME TO LIGHT FOLLOWING A JULY 13 PRAVDA REPORT OF A JULY 12 MEETING BETWEEN BAHR AND CANDIDATE POLITBURO MEMBER PONOMAREV AT WHICH QUESTIONS OF "MUTUAL INTEREST" WERE SAID TO HAVE BEEN DISCUSSED. THE FRG CHARGE AND MINISTER COUNSELOR HAVE SINCE TOLD US FHAT BAHR WAS FORMALLY INVITED AS A GUEST OF IMEMO DND WAS ACCOMPANIED BY A TANZANIAN, A YUGOSLAV, AND A FRG ACADEMIC. AMONG THE SUBJECTS BAHR AND HIS COLLEAGUES REPORTEDLY DISCUSSED WITH IMEMO'S HEAD NOZEMTSEV AND OTHERS WAS THE NORTH-SOUTH DIALOGUE, TAW MATERIAL SUPPLY, AND DISARMAMENT AND ITS RELATION TO THE DEVELOPING WORLD'S NEEDS.

2. ACCORDING TO THE FRG EMBASSY, WHICH AT BAHR'S
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REQUEST WAS NOT REPRESENTED AT ANY OF THE MEETINGS, PONOMAREV WAS WELL BRIEFED ON BAHR'S INTERESTS AND INDICATED HIS SUPPORT FOR FURTHER BILATERAL CONTACTS IN NORTH-SOUTH QUESTIONS, EITHER IN MOSCOW OR AT GENEVA. ACCORDING TO THE FRG CHARGE, BAHR LEFT HIS MEETINGS WITH PONOMAREV AND IMEMO WITH THE IMPRESSION THAT HE HAS A SOVIET GREEN LIGHT TO CON-

FINUE HIS DIALOGUE. NO DATE FOR A FOLLOW-UP
MEETING HAS BEEN SET AND BAHR IS SAID TO REMAIN CAUTIOUS
ABOUT WHAT MIGHT FINALLY RESULT, ALTHOUGH A
REPORT IS DUE NEXT YEAR.

3. THE FRG EMBASSY TELLS US THAT DURING THE JULY 12
MEETING PONOMAREV CHIDED THE WEST FOR NOT HAVING
RESPONDED YET TO THE EAST'S JUNE MBFR INITIATIVE.
BAHR RESPONDED THAT THE SOVIETS SHOULD BE SATISFIED
WITH THE DELAY SINCE IT SHOWS THAT THEIR PROPOSAL
IS RECEIVING SERIOUS ATTENTION. FURTHER ON THE
MARGINS OF BAHR'S VISIT, ANATOLIY GROMYKO (THE
FOREIGN MINISTER'S SON WHO HEADS THE AFRICA INSTITUTE)
EXPRESSED TO BAHR HIS SKEPTICISM THAT NAMIBIA
WOULD INDEED RECEIVE REAL INDEPENDENCE AT THE END
OF THE YEAR AS SCHEDULED. GROMYKO FURTHER SAID HE
HAD NOT FOUND ANYONE WHO BELIEVED THAT A PEACEFUL
RESOLUTION OF THE RHODESIA QUESTION WOULD BE POSSIBLE.

4. COMMENT: BAHR'S IMPRESSION, AS CONVEYED TO THE
FRG EMBASSY, IS THAT BRANDT'S EFFORT TO DEVELOP A
DIALOGUE WITH THE SOVIETS ON NORTH-SOUTH QUESTIONS
IS MAKING HEADWAY. IF POSSIBLE, IN ANTICIPATION
OF FURTHER FRG-SOVIET CONTACTS EITHER HERE OR IN
GENEVA, WE WOULD APPRECIATE BACKGROUND ON BRANDT'S
COMMISSION. FROM TALKING WITH THE FRG EMBASSY,
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WE CONCLUDE THAT BAHR, ON THIS TRACK, IS OPERATING
LARGELY INDEPENDENTLY OF THE FOREIGN OFFICE.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: VISITS, PARTY LEADERS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 17 jul 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978MOSCOW16717
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: X1
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780294-0568
Format: TEL
From: MOSCOW
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780752/aaaabrzp.tel
Line Count: 97
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: c0e97f72-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 23 jun 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1986789
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: BAHR VISIT TO MOSCOW
TAGS: PEPR, GE, UR, (BAHR, EGON)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/c0e97f72-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014